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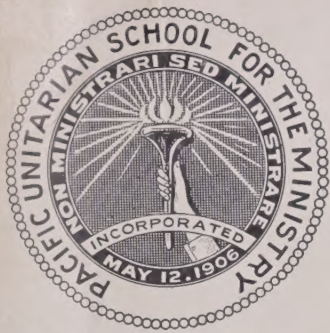
# DR. CHESTER ROWELL

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BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

THE GIFT OF







**DR. CHESTER ROWELL**

BORN 1844—DIED 1912



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## FOREWORD

Dr. Chester Rowell died in Los Angeles May 23, 1912. The news of his death called forth expressions of sorrow and appreciation throughout the state, and in Fresno, where he had lived almost from its foundation, the whole city was a house of mourning. The public memorial services were attended by almost the whole community, and a bronze statue has since been erected in the court house park as a permanent memorial of the affection and honor in which Dr. Rowell was held. Many requests have been made for the preservation of the addresses and published tributes given at the time of Dr. Rowell's death, and in response to those requests they are here published in this more permanent form. Of necessity, much has had to be omitted, including many letters, resolutions of sympathy, and editorial comments throughout the state. The addresses given at the memorial services, and the special articles published at the time, are here reprinted in full. Nothing could now be said which would add to these words of tribute then uttered by those who had known Dr. Rowell longest and best, as their associate in business and in public life, and as their friend and loved physician.







DR. ROWELL

*"Our friend is dead!" The words of one who knew  
And loved him well; and we who felt his hand,  
In passing, too, would speak. A host we stand,  
Indebted to that heart so brave and true,  
That "hand that gave and did not take." The dew  
That feeds the lowliest flower in all our land  
Was not impartial more than he, "Our Friend."  
His great religion was To Be, To Do.*

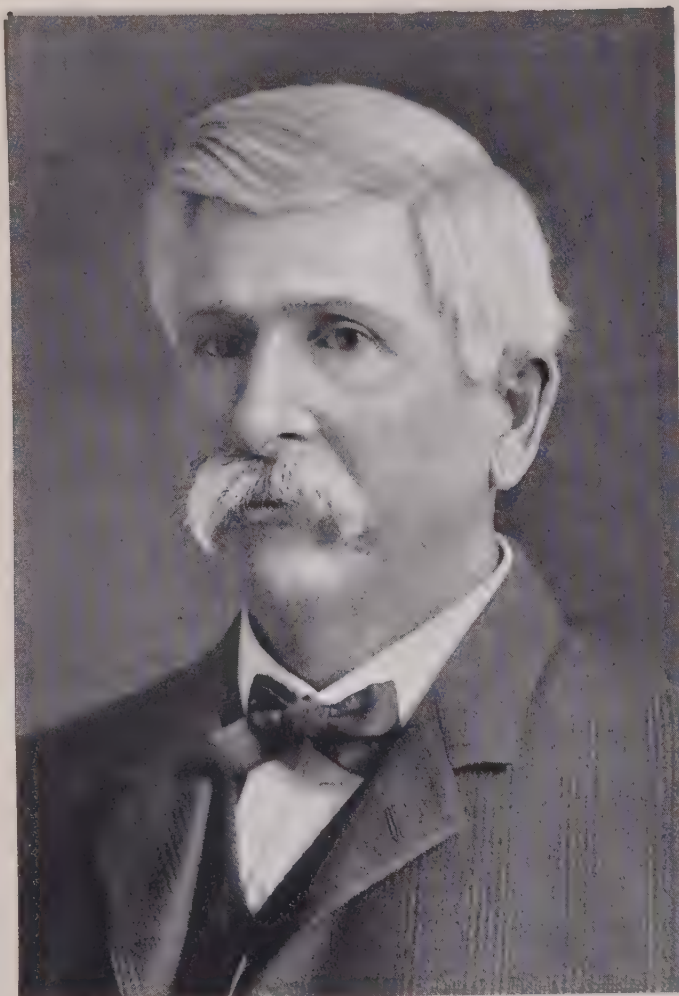
*Ah, we shall miss his kindly morning face,  
As one who mingled in our mirth,  
And miss him when the evening falls apace  
As one who shared with us the days of dearth.  
There is no death. For him eternal day.  
For us his life, his work, his love always.*

—D. L. C.

*Fresno, California, May 24, 1912.*







DR. CHESTER ROWELL





## OUR FRIEND IS DEAD

By John W. Short, in the Fresno Republican, May 24, 1912

Our friend is dead. These words will be on the lips and in the hearts of many, many people in Fresno today. They are words often spoken of one who has espoused a cause or rendered service to a people, but their meaning today will be different from the ordinary meaning. In the words we speak today is the feeling that comes to us when a hand that was always ready when we needed it is no longer within our grasp; when the busy hand that was extended to us all lies pulseless and inert. Whether we endure long or for a little time there are not many hands like it that we may clasp. It was the hand that gave and did not take. Not many hands are fashioned like that.

Thirty-one years ago this month I came to Fresno to set type for the Republican in the back room of a building where Goodman's store now stands. In the front room on the same floor of the old building was Doctor Rowell's office. It was fitting that he should be there. Through its various changes and vicissitudes he was never far away from the Republican. It was a child of his adoption and nurture and always he rejoiced in its virtues and regretted its failings. I think in later years he had no deeper joy than the knowledge of the good it had accomplished.

The first time I saw Doctor Rowell he was standing by the desk in his office engaged in a warm argument. The favorite theme of politics which the word argument suggests goes wide of the fact. The Doctor sometimes argued on other subjects.

"I know, Manuel," he was saying to the weather-stained and dilapidated foreigner who spoke very brokenly but with Latin fervor for the affirmative. "I know I went to see you a good many times, and the wife and the babies, but it's all in the day's work. Sometime when you get the mortgage off the land and the bills all paid you may give me something, but not now. You're not able to work much yet, and the wife and children will need more clothes this winter. No sir, you can't give me anything now."

Manuel raised his hands and voice again in hopeless protest, but the uplifted finger and decisive shake of the head which met his broken

protest left no room for further argument and he shuffled out the door and down the stairs. When he passed me there were tears in his eyes and on his face.

I did not know it then, but the incident had told me the history of Doctor Rowell's life. It was the history in point of time and labor of nearly forty years of busy life.

When the demands of his patients would permit it the Doctor would come into the Republican office and watch me as I set type or lifted the freshly printed pages from the old Washington hand press. When he talked to me his favorite subjects were the future of Fresno, the future of the paper and the great achievements of the Republican Party.

Doctor Rowell was a partisan of the old school in the best sense of the term. He believed in parties, and most of all in the Republican Party. He believed that the destiny of the republic was bound up in its destiny and that it was capable of every necessary achievement in government. A staunch partisan himself, he readily conceded the rights of others in their political faith. He respected their honesty but had no doubt at all about their being mistaken. Dr. Rowell was a partisan, but not a politician in the ordinary sense. Naturally a leader in thought and action, he was entirely lacking in the qualities which go to make the ordinary politician. In his party he was always against corporate control or other malign influence. He stood like adamant for justice and honesty in the Republican Party, and if there was ever a seeming exception to the rule it was because of mistaken faith in others.

For Dr. Rowell there was no such word in politics as expediency; no such thing as trimming the sail to catch the breeze of popular fancy. He was inexorably for what he believed to be the best thing, the right thing. This fixed determination on questions of men and measures sometimes aroused opposition, but his most active opponents conceded his sincerity and admired his honesty. They denied only that his unswerving devotion to principle was practical in politics. He was not a fanatic in trying to do the things that were impossible, but having decided what he believed to be the best thing that was possible to do, he gave himself steadfastly to the task of doing it.

Important as his services were in public life, to the great mass of the people of Fresno, to the old and the young, to the women and



children as well as the men, Doctor Rowell was best known as the physician, as the physician and friend. The life of a pioneer physician is always a hard one, but it was especially so in this country of wide distances and few doctors. From the mills and mines of the Sierras to the stock ranges of Cantua and Warthan Canyon he ranged the country in the blistering heat of summer and the chilling fogs of winter regardless of everything but the needs of those who suffered. The question of financial reward was the last one he considered, and far more often to refuse that which was due than to require it. From the poor and unfortunate he could not be induced to take pay.

For a period which dates from close to the beginning of history in Fresno County, Doctor Rowell led this life of tireless service, which has ended only with the end of life itself. That he grew to look upon it as a duty he owed to his fellow men is certain, and duty as he saw it was the beginning and end of life.

Undoubtedly it was this fealty to duty, this habit of giving personal service beyond the limit of endurance which shortened by many years a life that was dear to so many people. His effort to serve the public as mayor of the city amid conditions of unusual perplexity and grave difficulties was clearly the added burden under which his strength failed and his life was sacrificed. It was a sacrifice which should not have been made, but his nature and disposition were such that he could not refuse when the duty of serving the people in that way was presented to him.

Columns could be written in illustration of the few things I have said of the life and character of Doctor Rowell, but the facts are too well known, the remarkable personality is too familiar for such indulgence on my part. Doctor Rowell served faithfully the generation in which he lived. He helped those who were close at hand, not those who were far away. As a citizen he was alert and loyal. As a friend he was always ready to serve where service was most needed and never for reward. As a physician he lived the best standard of ethics, under the ideals of which must of necessity be an unselfish profession. He sought to alleviate, to help, not to gain reputation or fortune. No advertisements marked the way to his office, but no weary or afflicted ones sought in vain to find it. There were many to point the way.

And so there will be wider, truer sorrow in Fresno than if any other one had passed away. For he is gone who respected wealth but loved the poor, who admired success but helped those who failed, whose humanity was broad enough and heart large enough to reach us all.

## DEATH OF DR. ROWELL

From the Fresno Republican of May 24, 1912

LOS ANGELES, May 23.—Dr. Chester Rowell, mayor of Fresno, long identified with the business interests of Central California and one of the leaders of the state's political life, died at the residence of Councilman W. J. Washburn, 2200 Harvard Boulevard, at 9:35 tonight.

Dr. Rowell had been ill for some time, and about a week ago was brought to Los Angeles, where it was hoped he would be benefited by the change in temperature. His condition, however, did not improve and for the past two days it was known by his physicians that the end was near.

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While the daily bulletins in the last few days from the bedside of Dr. Rowell gave practically no ground for hope, still as he held on from day to day in his brave fight, expressions of hope were heard everywhere that the Doctor might yet rally in a permanent way. Although this was hoping against hope, the shock of the news of his death was little tempered by the knowledge that the end could not be far off.

While Dr. Rowell had been visibly breaking for several months under the strain and difficulties of many duties, his acute illness was a matter of some six weeks. It began with an attack of grip, with some symptoms of pneumonia, but the Doctor would not give in until it became absolutely imperative. When the Native Sons' Convention assembled in Fresno on April 22nd, the Doctor left a sick room to carry out his part of the public program and welcome the delegates as mayor on behalf of the city. Going to the hall in his automobile he was able to say but a few words, these scarcely audible, and it was then publicly realized that the Doctor was very ill.

Dr. Rowell's trouble seemed to be a general breakdown, brought on by worry and overwork. For some time before he was taken down his heart action was never under 100 and sometimes running as high as 120. As a result of cold and incipient pneumonia, one of his lungs



gave him great trouble. He could neither sit up nor lie down, but had to lean forward over a frame made for him. In a few days, however, this trouble greatly improved, and the Doctor seemed on the road to recovery, but other complications set in, indicating a general bodily breakdown.

A week ago Monday Dr. Rowell was removed to Los Angeles, as the unexpected warm weather aggravated his condition. Dr. Rowell stood the trip well and the first day showed encouraging improvement, but that night his condition became alarming again. Since then the Doctor had rallies and reactions, but the net result of every twenty-four hours was a loss of strength. The Doctor became gradually weaker and weaker until the end peacefully came.

Dr. Rowell's breakdown was undoubtedly caused by an attempt to do too many men's work. In addition to the many details and vexations of the position of mayor, he undertook to build the Convention Hall without the necessity of calling upon the people to vote bonds, and he felt keenly disappointed at the lack of public response. All these things, together with the details of planning his own building, weighed heavily upon the Doctor. His medical practice, too, he felt that he could not give up. "When I am here and people come for me, I cannot refuse," he said many times when urged to retire from practice. As soon as things get straightened out, he would say, then he could take another trip around the world, and that would enable him to give up his practice.

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SACRAMENTO, May 23.—When informed of the death at Los Angeles of Mayor Rowell of Fresno, Governor Johnson tonight expressed deep sorrow, speaking both for himself and for the state at large. He said:

"In the death of Dr. Rowell, the state has suffered a very great loss. He was a man of great probity, energy and ability, a man of sterling worth. In his legislative career, with which the state is most familiar, he acted always unselfishly and patriotically for the state. We all deeply regret his death."

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

From the Fresno Republican of May 24, 1912

Dr. Chester Rowell was born in Woodsville, N. H., October 17, 1844, one of eight sons of Jonathan and Cynthia (Abbott) Rowell. In 1849 the family moved to Stout's Grove, near Bloomington, Ill., where the father died the next year. With the other younger children Chester lived with his mother on the Illinois pioneer farm, and the family were known as "Widow Rowell's boys."

With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Chester, with four other brothers, entered the Union army. He was then 17 years old, and was not formally enlisted, going with his elder brother, Jonathan Harvey Rowell, father of Chester H. Rowell. He took part in the battles of Fort Donelson, Shiloh, the siege of Vicksburg, and most of the battles and campaign of the Army of the Tennessee, from 1861 to 1864.

After the war, Mr. Rowell attended Lombard College, Galesburg, Ill., for a time and then went to Chicago, where he attended a business college and took up the study of medicine in private. In 1866 he came across the plains to California and settled in San Francisco. He further pursued his study of medicine under his cousin, Dr. Isaac Rowell, one of the eminent early-day practitioners of San Francisco. He then attended the medical department of the University of the Pacific, now Cooper Medical College, where he graduated in 1870. While pursuing his medical course, he taught school in Oregon for a year.

Immediately after graduating, Dr. Rowell began the practice of his profession in San Francisco. The young doctor was a friend and intimate of Dr. Lane, the founder of Lane's Hospital, and was always a warm admirer of the great surgeon. Every year during his entire career of a practicing physician Dr. Rowell attended the annual "Lane lectures."

Dr. Rowell came to Fresno in 1874 and continued the practice of his profession up to about three weeks ago, when, after earnest persuasion and with much reluctance, he permitted the announcement to be made on his office door, "Dr. Rowell has resigned from medical practice."



Dr. Leach had practiced at Millerton, coming down with the town in 1872 and establishing his home on K Street, on the lots adjoining the Republican Building. Dr. Rowell bought the corner opposite, where he had continually made his home up to a few months ago.

Much of the hardship of medical practice in pioneer days fell to Dr. Rowell. The country was sparsely peopled, but little settlements had grown up in the foothills and far away on the plains. Frequently the Doctor was called upon to make all-night trips.

Dr. Rowell early took an active interest in politics. When he came to Fresno, the county was nearly unanimously Democratic. In 1876 Dr. Rowell established the Republican as a small weekly paper, having it set up and printed in the back of his office. In such time as he could spare from his practice he wrote editorials and news matter for the paper. After three years the Doctor gave the paper over to others, and after many vicissitudes the property was organized in 1891 under the present control, with Dr. Rowell president and largest stockholder.

In 1879, Dr. Rowell became a candidate for state senator, and was the first Republican ever elected to office in Fresno County. The session is notable as the last one before the adoption of the new constitution.

In 1882, and again in 1886, Dr. Rowell was the choice of his party in the San Joaquin Valley for railroad commissioner. Railroad domination at that time was a great abuse and the San Joaquin Valley was strongly demanding an independent man on the commission. Dr. Rowell was twice beaten for the nomination at the hands of the railroad politicians.

In 1890 Dr. Rowell was an aspirant for the Republican nomination for Congress from the old Sixth District, including the valley counties and running as far south as San Diego. At that time his brother, J. H. Rowell, was a member of Congress from Illinois, and it was this fact that made the position attractive to the Doctor. The Congressional Convention was held in Fresno, in the old Grady Opera House, and is still remembered as the scene of one of the most stubbornly conducted political battles in California. There were three candidates, Dr. Rowell,

W. W. Bowers of San Diego, and Lindsay of Los Angeles. Sixty ballots were taken without choice. Then by a combination of the Bowers and Lindsay forces, the convention was adjourned to Ventura. In the meantime the Bowers and Lindsay delegates got together and the nomination went to Bowers.

Dr. Rowell was elected to the State Senate again in 1898, and for the third time in 1902. In the session of 1900 he took a prominent part in the election of United States senator. The railroad machine was backing the candidacy of Dan Burns, but could not muster votes enough to elect. The anti-Burns vote was divided among several candidates. Dr. Rowell from the first voted for Thomas R. Bard. For many long days of the roll call, Bard received but the single vote, but at length attracted more and more support. After the session adjourned without choice, it became increasingly obvious that Bard was the logical and natural candidate and at the extra session was finally chosen. In the session of 1905, Dr. Rowell supported Senator Bard for re-election, but the legislature of that year was railroad controlled and Bard failed of election.

Dr. Rowell has held a number of other positions of honorary character, but never sought or held any office of emolument. Perhaps no position was more highly prized by him than regent of the University of California. He was first appointed regent by Governor Markham in 1891 and has served ever since, being the senior member of the board in point of service. The Doctor was reappointed by Governor Johnson.

Dr. Rowell was appointed a member of the State Board of Health in 1880 and was a presidential elector in 1884. He was a delegate to the national Republican committee of nine that framed the national platform of that year, upon which McKinley was elected for his second term. The last part the Doctor took in national politics was as a Taft delegate to the Chicago convention at the recent state primary.

Early in 1909, Dr. Rowell was urged by many to become a candidate for mayor and finally consented when his friends urged it upon him as a duty. He was elected by a large majority and has served three years of the four-year term. With the exception of one or two meetings during the mayor's illness, he had never missed a meeting of the board. To secure a convention hall for Fresno was the official project always nearest the Doctor's heart.



Dr. Rowell was fond of foreign travel, and in 1887-8 he made an extended tour of the world, visiting Japan, China, India, Egypt, and all the countries of Europe. He collected a large number of views, which he had made into stereopticon slides and was frequently called upon at local affairs for lectures on his travels. A few years ago the Doctor made an extensive trip into Mexico and had for several years been promising himself another world tour.

In 1872, Dr. Rowell was married to Mrs. Nellie Rowell, widow of his former preceptor, her death occurring in 1884.

Dr. Rowell is survived by his stepdaughter, Mrs. Imogene Eldridge, of Berkeley, who was at the bedside; two brothers—A. A. Rowell of Selma and Milo Rowell of Seattle. W. F. Rowell, a third brother, formerly of Easton, died in San Jose a week ago last Monday, in his 74th year. A large number of nephews and nieces will mourn the Doctor as a father. Those known here are Chester H. Rowell and Mrs. Clyde Olney, son and daughter of the late Jonathan Harvey Rowell of Bloomington; Milo Rowell and H. D. Rowell, Edna E. Rowell, Isabel R. Rowell, Gertrude R. Rowell, and Mrs. C. H. Reynolds of San Jose, children of the late W. F. Rowell, and Homer Rowell.

In religious belief Dr. Rowell was a Unitarian. He always took a leading part in the church in this city. After the reorganization of the local congregation meetings were for a time held in Risley Hall. When property was left the church as a site for a home, Dr. Rowell undertook, with the assistance of fellow members and friends, to raise sufficient funds for the erection of a building, and the present edifice at the corner of O and Tuolumne streets is the result. Dr. Rowell was president of the board of trustees of the local church and president of the Unitarian Conference of the Pacific.

Dr. Rowell was a man of much public spirit and educational matters appealed to him strongly. In the early days he established a high school in Fresno and engaged a teacher.

While business as such did not greatly appeal to the Doctor, he was a man of sound and conservative ideas. He served as president of the People's Savings Bank since its organization. He never engaged in speculation of any kind and money-making was never the primary motive in any of his various activities.

## FUNERAL SERVICES

From the Fresno Republican of May 27, 1912

The people of the City of Fresno yesterday paid their last tribute to the memory of Dr. Chester Rowell.

Private funeral services for Dr. Rowell were held at the First Unitarian Church in the morning, the relatives, close friends and the congregation being practically the only attendants. The funeral service was a simple one and in it were given many musical selections and readings which were favorites of the Doctor. Rev. Thomas Clayton, pastor of the church, gave the only address.

In the afternoon, beneath a canopy of green, with heads uncovered and eyes dimmed, the thousands who had known him and loved him, gathered in the Court House Park and silently gave to him their final token of respect. Rich and poor, high and low, the children of many nations, all joined together in the testimonial of esteem that was given him there.

From the lips of those who had been chosen to give public expression to the grief which was shown, came words of tribute to his memory, and as they were related, well known loving characteristics of Dr. Rowell and his life, many a head was bowed and many an eye filled with tears. Addresses were given by Rev. Earl M. Wilbur of Berkeley, Alva E. Snow, acting Mayor of Fresno, Assemblyman W. F. Chandler, Dr. Benjamin Ide Wheeler, president of the University of California, and Frank H. Short.

In addition to the individual floral contributions, there were contributed countless numbers of flowers from Kearney Park and Roeding Park, which were used in the decoration of the church. A solid bank of flowers was massed along the front of the platform, forming a setting for the set pieces which were sent. At the morning service there was not sufficient room in the front of the church for all the offerings and many were massed in the rear of the church. In the afternoon, however, when the church was thrown open for those who wished to take a last look at the countenance of the Doctor, all these pieces had been gathered together and placed on the platform, above the body of Dr. Rowell, forming a picture that will not soon be forgotten.



The body of Dr. Rowell, under a guard of police, and accompanied by the members of the board of city trustees, was conducted from the undertaking parlors of Stephens & Bean to the church at 10 o'clock. Throughout the day, his body lay in the Unitarian Church, which he had been instrumental in building, surrounded by a bewildering mass of floral beauty. Every token shown there was the tribute of a friend and each one bespoke its separate farewell to the one who had departed.

The church was opened a few minutes in the morning, after the private funeral service, to allow relatives, close friends and members of the congregation to look upon Dr. Rowell's face, and then was closed until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. From that time until 9 o'clock at night, thousands streamed into the building and took a farewell glance. To many, the picture brought tears, as there was recalled the man who had lived, and to all there was brought a feeling of depression and sorrow.

Upon the breast of Dr. Rowell had been pinned the Stars and Stripes, and while he lay at rest, there was upon his face the story of his illness and suffering.

After the church had closed last night, the police escort, the city trustees, members of the board of trustees of the Unitarian Church and friends accompanied the body back to the mortuary chapel, where it remained until it was taken to Oakland.

## MEMORIAL ADDRESSES

REV. THOMAS CLAYTON

"The first announcement that greeted our eyes on Friday morning was, 'Our Friend Is Dead.' That exactly expresses the situation. For Dr. Rowell was the personal friend of each and all of us. Every person who knew him even slightly has a deep sense of loss. Nearly all of us were in some sense under obligation to him for some kindness or friendly service. His whole life was spent in doing things for others. All his thought and effort had but one end, the service of his kind. He took humanity as a whole to his heart.

"The key to his life and character was furnished me on a trip to the coast we took together, soon after my arrival in Fresno. He seemed to know every square mile of the state, who lived there, what the land was good for, and everything. Every automobile that was standing still, we must stop to see if they needed help. He was always so anxious to do something. The least appearance of trouble of any kind, we must try to be of some help. I had never seen a man who was so solicitous to serve; and very few of the people suspected who it was, that quietly offered assistance. Scarcely had we reached the coast than he said, 'I must get back to Fresno.' When asked why he wanted to go back to the heat and toil, he replied, 'There are some people there who need me.' We went for a fifteen-day trip, and returned in nine days, and the next afternoon, in a temperature of 102 degrees, he was smiling, happy in the office among a crowd of poor patients. This is told as a typical attitude of the man.

"Aside from his goodness, he was a remarkable man who had a varied career, and a multitude of interests on his mind and heart. He was exceedingly well read in world affairs. In his travels abroad he had used his keen eyes to great advantage. A strong memory enabled him to furnish valuable details about the various countries and people he had visited and his conversation never wearied you. He knew accurately the peculiarities of all the varied races of the world. In addition to being intensely patriotic, he was a great lover of California. All the political, social and educational interests of the state had his deep attention and interest. He was very proud of the State University, as every Californian may well be. Of Fresno County, he seemed to



know every foot, and almost every family. It was a perpetual source of wonder to me, how he could keep track of so much and so many.

"But of all his many interests, Fresno was the dearest. It was soon evident that 'love me, meant love Fresno.' Queen Mary said they might find the word 'Calais' written on her heart. Surely there is a picture of Fresno on that heart that has ceased to beat. Every interest was his. He wanted good streets, playgrounds, parks, everything that would make the people happy. His especial interests have been the Republican, the Roeding Park, the Unitarian Church, the people's auditorium. Each of these will remain as a monument of his industry and deep devotion to the people's welfare.

"We cannot forbear to speak of him as the 'beloved physician.' The image of that closed office has been painful to us! Closed to so many poor sufferers, who have gone to him as a benevolent father for many years. The story of that office is worthy of the pen of another 'Ian McLaren.' What painter shall sketch for us that kindly face, bending over the tiny purse of the poor woman so anxious to 'pay'? His chuckle as he closed it on the scanty dollars, and said, 'Take it all home and buy something for the children.' It will be long ere we look on his like again.

"So far we have viewed Dr. Rowell as a public man and citizen; doing scant justice to the real merits of the man, but we are to think of him as the chief supporter of this church. What he was to the Unitarian cause for the past thirty years, only a few of us know. Probably no other interest or cause in Fresno absorbed so much of his thought in recent years as this church. Rarely was he absent from a meeting, never when he could help it; deeply interested in all that was said and done. Here, perhaps, as much as anywhere, the man was fully revealed; his intense love of flowers, of music, his keen appreciation when a good point was made in a discourse; but, above all else, will linger in our memory his affectionate interest in the children and young people. To see them happy was a source of delight to him. Any suggestion or plan to give them a 'good time' was met with his enthusiastic approval instantly, and his purse was out to help with the expenses. Many a night after an entertainment, although tired with a hard day, he would insist on taking the people home who lived some distance and had to walk. The spectacle of a chief magistrate and busy physician, advancing in years, running around in the dark,

sometimes in the rain, too, to see young and old home at late hours, is one not easy to forget, and strikes the heart with a painful sense of costly bereavement. How we shall miss him!

"This church will stand as one of his noblest monuments. It is not too much to say, he caused it to be built. The church was too small and weak to attempt such an enterprise without his powerful influence and generous financial assistance. From the lifting of the first shovelful of earth to the moment of dedication, he was busy looking after every detail, and rejoicing in the realization of one of his cherished hopes, he had harbored for many years.

"We who lived with him here and loved him, will feel it devolves upon us to establish his beloved church upon a strong and sure and lasting foundation. We shall see to it that his time and labor and love have not been given in vain. His kindly spirit will linger here and be a benediction to us, and an inspiration to go on in the good work of making the burdens of life easier for the weary and heavy laden.

"We shall remember his last Sunday with us some weeks ago. He must have felt it was the last, for he came in to the Sunday School, and visited all the classes, and expressed his delight at so promising a lot of children and young people. He was exhausted before the service was over and had to leave. Like everything else, he did not confine his interest to the Unitarian cause in Fresno, he was interested in the churches of the Pacific Coast Conference, and was its president at the time of his death, presiding at its sessions here only two months ago. Softly, calmly he was glided from our midst, already the world seems more lonesome and dark. One more loving soul invites us to the Great Beyond. He has gone from us, yet remains with us. He is dead, and yet speaketh, aye! and shall speak in the long years to come. The speaker is but one of many of his warm friends; many have known him longer, though none can appreciate him more; may I without seeming irrelevant, suggest that we build in this city some worthy monument to this, one of the first, and the greatest citizen of Fresno? Perhaps in Roeding Park, in which he took such a deep interest, some statue or adornment that shall tell to those who come after, what a splendid citizen once lived here and did so much to make the city they are proud of; something that shall perpetuate the



memory of his kindly and benevolent life, that some, at least, may drink of his spirit, and be saved from sordid selfishness.

"Upon that monument, were I permitted, I would inscribe the great poet's eulogy upon a great man, nor deem it out of place:

*"His life was gentle, and the elements  
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, 'This was a man.'"*

REV. EARL M. WILBUR

"Citizens of Fresno: The friends of Dr. Rowell have gathered together here to express the respect, honor and love we feel for a man respected by all who knew him, honored by all who came into relation with him, and who was loved by a whole great community as it has fallen to few men to be loved.

"Dr. Rowell lived sixty-eight years and was for forty-two years a doctor. He loved best to call himself an old-fashioned country doctor and like one of the old, called the Good Physician, the best description of his life that could be given was that, 'he went about doing good' and healing in an age when the spirit of commercialism is rampant and the mercenary spirit sometimes invades the noblest profession. He was forgiving even to a fault.

"For thirty-eight years he was directly or indirectly connected with journalism and through the newspaper which he founded, exercised what may fully be claimed to be a wider and deeper influence than is exercised by any other paper in the State of California.

"For thirty-three years he took part in the public life of the state, always standing for the right as God gave him to see the right and never thinking of his personal interests, in preference to the public ones.

"For twenty-one years he served the educational interests of the state as a regent of the State University. He was extraordinarily regular and punctual at meetings and alert and progressive in all that looked to advancement.

"I should leave out an important phase of his public service if I did not mention his devotion, during the past twenty-five years, to the public interests of religion in the community. He would, perhaps, have been reluctant to call himself a religious man, under some

definitions of the word. But, if essence of religion be, as I believe, an attitude of reverence toward the universe and all good in it, and a belief in the best in men, then he was a profoundly religious man. And one great satisfaction of his last years was that he had lived to see his church firmly established in the community. He was seldom absent from its services.

"During the last three years, he served as mayor, receiving at your hands, the highest honor you can bestow, in this community.

"This is a notable record of varied public service in many lines and one may say, in carefully measured words, 'There has been no man, since this great valley was first settled, who has exercised as broad and deep influence for good in the city, county and through the valley as Dr. Rowell.' It is hardly possible that any other man can wield a greater influence in the future in a community as richly blessed, which can count such a man among its citizens."

ALVA E. SNOW

"Friends, by our presence here we pay tribute today to the memory of one who was more universally respected, whose taking off will be more universally regretted, than any other man personally known to us. Nor is that respect and regret confined, either, to the city or County of Fresno, but is state-wide, for the reason that his services to the state (and they were many, covering a long period of time) were without exception of a high character and absolutely free from selfish motives.

"Throughout this city you see the flags at half mast and the somber draperies hanging from private as well as public buildings, symbols of respect and tender feelings toward Dr. Rowell.

"Long will he be remembered by thousands of grateful people in Fresno County, whose physician and friend he has been in the last thirty years and down to within a few weeks of his death.

"From the time I first came to Fresno, a little more than twenty years ago, I have known Dr. Rowell, but never so intimately as in the last three years, during which time he has been mayor of this city, and I a member of his council. As such a member, I was generally acquainted with his views concerning city affairs.

"It is possible I was not acquainted in detail with all his hopes and plans, looking toward the permanent upbuilding and betterment of



Fresno. It may be that I do not know all the sacrifices he has made in its behalf, together with the disappointments he has had to meet, yet I do know that I am acquainted with enough of them to say to you, that this city will be fortunate indeed should it ever in the future have a mayor as loyal to Fresno as was Dr. Rowell.

"Criticisms of him there were from various and unexpected sources. Never of his motives, but of his judgment. Time alone will tell whether his judgment or the judgment of his critics was in error.

"The time is here now, in one matter, which was demonstrated almost to a common consent, that his judgment in that respect was sound and that of his critics faulty.

"To honest criticism no man can object; to other than honest criticism no man should be subjected.

"A little less than two months ago, while we were discussing city conditions, he expressed to me the hope that he would be able to complete, during his incumbency, certain plans which he believed would be, if carried out, of great and lasting benefit to Fresno. At this time he did not seem to be in his usual optimistic mood. I thought then that he referred to the shortness of the time that was left, in which to complete his work before his term of office would expire. I believe now that he had reference to a feeling that possibly he would be compelled to surrender because of his weakening physical condition.

"It is a pity that he could not have been spared to have completed his work. It is a pity that he could not have lived for a few years longer that he might enjoy, in common with the rest of us, the finished product of his undertakings, and to have finally realized what must ultimately come to pass, a public appreciation of his work.

"It is hard for Fresno to lose such a man. Yet Fresno is to be congratulated, indeed, that it had such a man as Dr. Rowell to lose."

#### W. F. CHANDLER

"Friends, this is an occasion when words are inadequate to express our feelings, and any attempt to speak of the noble, kind-hearted deeds of our deceased friend would fall so far short of satisfying the speaker or those to whom it is spoken that I feel that words would

be better not uttered. But you are not here for the purpose of hearing what the speakers have to say, but to pay respect to the memory of your dear doctor.

"It has been my privilege to know the deceased intimately well. I became acquainted with him as a doctor about twenty years ago, and for several years knew him, just as many of you have known him. During the years of 1901 and 1905 I was a member of the lower house of the State Legislature and he was a member of the upper house. You who remember the personnel and affiliations of the members of those two sessions know that they were not congenial to such men as Dr. Rowell.

"We roomed in the same building, ate at the same table, worked for the things we thought were right and opposed those we thought were wrong. From some of those legislative battles, scars still exist, but when the battle's smoke had cleared, we always found his vote recorded in the right column. In more instances than one, I have known his vote to be the only one in the negative.

"During those sessions we became intimately acquainted. I learned to know and respect him as I have learned to know and love but few men.

"Dr Rowell was a remarkable man in more ways than one. He was in the front of practically every public and political movement of the country and state. He always took an active part in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the city, and yet he made few mistakes. It is easy to sit in the office and home and criticize and it is easy to avoid mistakes by not doing. We, who have done little, have made mistakes. He was the most active, aggressive, outspoken of us all, and yet made fewer mistakes than we.

"The Doctor's pride was the Fresno Republican. He was jealous of its reputation. No man or cause could get support through its columns if his or its reputation was not good. His ideas, as expressed in his paper, and by his private life, have set a high standard for clean manhood, clean politics and morality in every community where he was known, or his paper was read. He was a man of pronounced views. He had strong likes and dislikes and when he expressed himself, all knew that he had spoken.

"Some of Dr. Rowell's virtues were abnormal. I say he was honest, yes. But there are other honest men. Yet his honesty was such that it would lead you to confide in him your closest secret without the slightest fear of that confidence being betrayed.

"I say that he was generous. All around us we find generous people but his generosity was such that everyone who came in contact with him became his debtor. He was particularly generous to the poor.

"I say that he was kind. You and I and other people are kind also, but our kindness reaches only a few of our particular friends, while his kindness, like the waves of ether from the wireless, reached out and out until it reached the very limits of his extensive acquaintance and was felt by everyone.

"Friends, we have met with a greater loss than we can at this time realize. The shock has stunned us. We cannot now feel as we will later feel the terrible vacancy that his death has created. We will find a vacancy in the affairs of city, county and state, and we who are left will need to doubly exert ourselves in order to maintain the high standard of the things with which he was connected.

"This community has been indeed fortunate in having such a man in its midst and we are better men and women by his having lived with us."

#### BENJAMIN IDE WHEELER

"Of all things in this human world we can least afford to lose is a friend. We may lose riches, they can be regained. Where can we find a friend, if lost?

"Dr. Rowell was my friend, and he was the friend of every one of you. The world does not consist of the piling up of metal. Look at the miser, who clutches for gold, yet is friendless. What has a miser if he has not a friend?

"The greatest thing in the world is love. The most precious possession you and I can have is a friend. A friend is one who does for us without expecting reward. Such a friend was Dr. Rowell. What he did, he did out of a heart of love.

"I once went with Dr. Rowell to visit a family living just outside the city. These people were late comers to this country and as late



comers were arriving at the belief that there were no friends here. They had occasion to know there is friendliness in this sordid world of ours, however, and that friendliness was expressed in Dr. Rowell. He entered that home, where he knew every one of the family by name, and showed himself to be indeed a friend.

"He was kind to little children. He was a helper to the weak, but above all, he was tender to children. Because he has done it 'to the least of these,' he has won the approval of his Master.

"There are in this country today many classes. One class is dissatisfied with the division of worldly things and seeks a revolution. Another class is against present rules and seeks to bring about a revolution by violence.

"What recipe shall we seek for the various classes? No recipe of law or force can be found. We can only find the recipe in citizens like this man. We can only find it in men who have the patience of Dr. Rowell, in men who have sympathy and can see the point of view of other men. Above all, we must have men of rectitude, who are unable to depart from the upright standards of truth.

"How he could forgive. How well he knew none of you were angels. How he could be patient and sympathize with you.

"Just before he left for Los Angeles, on his last trip, although hard smitten, he wrote me a letter telling of his illness but said he hoped in time to recover and hoped to have strength to do even more work than he had been doing.

"He cared for the university and I know why. Month after month, he was punctual at the meetings, coming up on the night train. When he was in the State senate he defended the good name of the university against traducers. He knew that this university is free to the son of any man, who can go freely to the top, if he has the will power. He cared for that because he cared for you.

"Farewell, good physician. Farewell, kind friend of children and helper of the weak. Farewell, good senator, good mayor, good regent. Farewell, Dr. Rowell, we shall not soon see thy like again. Farewell!"

FRANK H. SHORT

"A little less than a year ago I stood on shipboard, looking out over the sea hard by the coast of England. The natives of the different nations of the world had congregated to do honor to the coronation of George the Fifth of England. It was two thousand years after the

birth of the Prince of Peace, but the great pageantry of war stretched from horizon to horizon, and each battleship (and there were some four hundred of them) represented destructive power enough to have put to rout and ruin all the forces and power of Rome in a day.

"Two thousand years of Christianity have sufficed to bring some semblance of justice, of order, of forbearance between individuals, but as between nations there still survives, almost without limitation, the rule 'That each shall take who hath the power, and keep whate'er he can.' It was nearly eighteen hundred years after the words of brotherhood and equality had been spoken in Judea before they had anywhere been written into laws. The Savior said: 'Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me.' And, 'Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more.'

"It was seventeen hundred and seventy-six years later when it was said, 'All men are created free and equal,' and, 'Endowed with the inalienable right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.'

"As Dr. Webster has said, we stand face to face with increasing discord and decreasing tolerance, needing as a people more than ever before to exercise the virtues of tolerance, patience, forbearance, forgiveness and of love.

"Today we feel as we ought to feel tomorrow and ever after, for none can stand in the presence of him that is dead without imbibing some of the true spirit of Christian kindness and humility.

"When I first came to know Dr. Rowell most of the trees under which you are sitting had not been planted. The older ones immediately around the court house were then young, and most of this country was a desert waste.

"Our dead friend in his youth had but one advantage and one exceptional opportunity. He was poor, and was a widow's son. To the Widow Rowell's boys there came the necessity, the duty, the opportunity, the inspiration of honest labor for the support of their widowed mother and their own advancement. Such boys, with such duties and such opportunity, if possessed of good bodies and of good minds, cannot fail. They were not handicapped by any sentiments of despondency or of the duty of the state. Theirs was the duty, theirs the honor, theirs the pleasure. And so it is but natural that the 'Widow Rowell's boys,' one and all, should be men of character and credit in any community where they might live.

"I knew the Doctor's brother, Frank Rowell, very well. He was one of my first clients, and my lifelong friends. He just passed away but a few days ago, and none of us ever knew a man who was more faithful, more devoted, and more true to every duty, and to every connection and to every association of life. And so it was with them all. Born in a period of opportunity, living under the spur of necessity, and never shirking a duty, they naturally grew the strongest and best types of citizenship of this or any other country.

"But the difficulties and deprivations of a country practice did not seem to weigh upon Dr. Rowell at all. He relished it, he enjoyed it, and whether he earned much or little, he was happy because he was busy and helping others.

"No man that any of us ever knew lived so long and well the doctrine of doing service to 'the least of these, my children.' He lived in this valley thirty-eight long years, every one of which was devoted to unremitting toil and an unselfish effort to relieve the suffering, the misfortunes and the travail of God's own poor. He had what some might call a wider purpose and a larger view, but is most distinguished in my mind for that rarer, truer virtue of simple love and helpfulness for those in actual need. To have known him well, to have enjoyed his friendship, for more than thirty years, is one of the things that gives to life a brighter look and makes the life we have lived worth while.

"He lived for this state, this valley and this people, and as we shall labor in the years to come to develop, to advance, to make better this valley and this people, we shall, one and all, be carried on and carrying out the work of his lifetime, and the labor that he loved so well.

"Words cannot express our thoughts nor describe the sorrow that is common to us all. Through all the many years now gone we have seen his labor of love continue unselfish and unstinted. It never ceased or wavered as the years went by, but continued with the years, and as his hair turned gray and his head bent low and the loving but reluctant fingers of time were tracing the inevitable record of the years on his withering form, his faithful, devoted labor passed only with his breath away.

"So that if it be that in the hereafter the unselfish deeds done in this life are most rewarded, then, indeed, will his name lead all the rest in that last roll of honor."



## EDITORIAL TRIBUTES

### CHESTER ROWELL

Editorial from the Fresno Herald May 24, 1912

Fresno, the San Joaquin Valley and the State of California are poorer by the death of Dr. Chester Rowell, mayor of the city and long regarded as its leading citizen. After a long life of usefulness and unselfish service the grim summons called away an indomitable spirit and stilled forever a heart always animate with sympathy and kindness. The city mourns the loss of one who has been identified with its existence for more than a third of a century, and who, because of his devotion to its interests, will live long in the memory of its people.

Columns of space would be inadequate to extol the virtues of the great-hearted physician, the sympathetic friend, the good citizen, the truly manly man thus summoned from us. Dr. Rowell's name has been a household word in thousands of families in Fresno and vicinity for many years. Innumerable are the tributes of grateful men and women to whom he was more than physician, more even than friend. Long would be the complete story of his kindness, his unfailing generosity, his cheerful devotion to his chosen profession and his willingness to use it as an instrument for well doing.

In public life Dr. Rowell accomplished largely for Fresno County and for the state. His years in the Legislature were marked by unceasing devotion to the interests of those for whom he served. As a regent of the State University it was his desire to be regarded as deserving the honor of that responsible position. With no false pride he was proud of confidences bestowed, of honors earned, of public appreciation of his work. He gave liberally to aid worthy enterprises and was unsparing of himself in the effort to do good for others.

No one who knew Dr. Rowell in private life could fail to acknowledge his charm of manner, the sunniness of his disposition, the liberality of his nature. He was a favorite with everyone who had the good fortune to come in close contact with him, and none respected him more nor will grieve so much as those who worked with him or

were interested with him in business. It is but a poor compliment to say a man is honest, but in some men honesty is more than mere faithfulness to trust. With some, as with Dr. Rowell, it is a creed, a rule of life and conduct, and to such men honesty is at once the simplest duty and the greatest.

By Dr. Rowell's death is taken away the leading figure in Fresno's life. The city of today was but a village when he became identified with its activities. He watched its growth with almost paternal interest. And in return, the people of Fresno have regarded him and been pleased to honor him as their natural leader in good works.

It is always sad, this ending of a career of usefulness. It is good that at its close the worthy life should call forth universal mourning. In sorrow because of the death of Dr. Rowell all sorts and conditions of men will join, for he knew, and helped, and cheered and was the friend of all.

#### DR. CHESTER ROWELL

Editorial from the Fresno Republican May 24, 1912

In the death of Dr. Chester Rowell this community will feel an intimate personal loss and the state at large will mourn a man who in a quiet way had exerted a large influence in public affairs.

It will be in Fresno that the Doctor's death will be felt as a personal bereavement. It has fallen to the lot of few men to be mourned by so many people. Death of men prominent on the stage of public life excites a feeling of public mourning; the death of Dr. Rowell will come to many families with the poignant personal grief of a near and dear one.

In the last few days of the Doctor's illness, when it became only too evident that his life was slowly ebbing away, tears welled to the eyes of men when their anxious inquiries could no longer be answered in hope. This is the best tribute to the Doctor's life in Fresno and needs no words to supplement it.

To the people of Fresno, he will always be Dr. Rowell. Thrice elected senator, the title of senator never attached to him except in formal etiquette at Sacramento. Mayor Rowell was likewise but a formal title. It was as Dr. Rowell that he was known and loved and as such his memory will be ever cherished.

The Doctor's life was a beautifully simple one. For nearly forty years he labored in this community and ministered to the people. The keynote of his career was service. The larger calls of city, state and nation always found a ready response, but the appeals of "the least of these" were never permitted to go unheard. Dr. Rowell was a lover of his fellow man. Nothing of humanity was a thing apart from him. His ideals of duty were of the highest, in little things as in big. As mayor he never missed a meeting of the board until his illness compelled a cessation of a wonderfully active life; as state senator he was always at his desk; as regent of the State University he rarely missed a meeting.

Dr. Rowell was a man of deep and strong convictions. In his devotion to a cause he was uncompromising; in his friendships he was loyal and true; he never cherished resentments, but often was seen to show a broad charitableness that bespoke a generous spirit and broad-minded attitude.

In years, Dr. Rowell lived to be a few months less than 68; in hours of service he lived longer than most men who attain a larger span of life. If he had lived another year he would have seen the realization of the cherished plans of his later life. It was not so to be.

Dr. Rowell is dead; but his life remains as an example and an inspiration. In that sense there is no death, and that is the worthiest and noblest purpose in life.

#### FRESNO'S TRIBUTE

Editorial from the Fresno Republican of May 27, 1912

We know of no more remarkable tribute to the memory of any man than that paid to Dr. Rowell yesterday afternoon at the public memorial services in the Court House Park. A spontaneous gathering made a huge circle to the edges of which trained and resonant speaking voices failed to carry. And it was such a crowd! Thoroughly representative of cosmopolitan Fresno—the Fresno that the Doctor so dearly loved; a world traveler himself, he delighted in finding an epitomized world in his own city.

That great mass of diverse people could hardly have gathered together just that way upon any other occasion. But a common sorrow for the time brought about before the eyes of all of us what we all



supposed to be a dream of the millenium—the brotherhood of man. And it was particularly fitting that this gathering of rich and poor, young and old, of people of different tongues and colors, from many climes, should come spontaneously together in common brotherhood to pay each his tribute to the man whose great heart beat for all humanity and knew not race, or creed, or condition.

Does it not teach us after all that what this world chiefly needs is humanity? We hear this solution of the race problem and that solution of our industrial ills; this remedy to stop the impending clash of class interests, that to check the insensate lust of greed. After seeing the potent influence of one great heart, though stilled in death, one does not have to search for the real basic remedy. That heart stilled in death? Not so; it pulsed throughout that great throng yesterday, making all as one. The lesson can not be temporary—something of it will remain, let us hope much. In Fresno, at least, if racial feeling should arise, if industrial or class conflict should flare up, if differences of creed should grow bitter, let us recall yesterday's concourse and remember that all of us, after all, can find the common ground of love, and remembering that, there can be no strife.

The tribute of words paid to Dr. Rowell was by men who had come close to him in his various fields of activity and who loved him for his nobleness and simplicity of character. These words were all spoken from the heart, they were simple and they were true. But the great tribute was the outpouring of all Fresno. The speakers gave expression to the common grief. Had any of them not been upon the speaker's platform he would have been one down in the great audience.

Dr. Rowell was great in life; in death his spirit is greater. In the allotted span of earthly existence Dr. Rowell, under the most favored circumstances, could not have been with us in the body many years longer; the lesson of his life, as so beautifully exemplified yesterday, will abide with us while memory lasts and tradition holds.

#### IN MEMORIAM

Editorial from the Los Angeles Express

The Express records with profound regret the death in this city Thursday night of Dr. Chester Rowell, a noble physician, a gallant soldier, a capable journalist, and one of the builders of the commonwealth.

In his time he played many parts and all with intelligence and conscience. With his death ends a life ripened not alone in the abundance of its years but in the plenitude of service. California is fortunate in the memories it keeps of the son she loses and enriched by an example that will endure long after what was Dr. Rowell has been resolved into indistinguishable dust.

Born in 1844, he was but a boy when the Civil War began, yet such was the ardor of his patriotism that he enlisted, one of five brothers that the Rowell household gave to the defense of the Union. Gallantly fighting in some of the great battles of the rebellion, favoring fortune preserved him from a single wound. After the war he devoted himself to the study of medicine, concluding his studies in San Francisco, whither, in 1866, he had removed from Illinois.

Thus all the years of his manhood have been given to the state of his adoption. He became not only a skilled physician but a great surgeon. Establishing his home in Fresno in 1874, two years later he founded the Fresno Republican, that is today one of the ablest, most virile and influential of the newspapers of the state.

The manifold requirements of his profession and the exterior activities in which he engaged did not prevent him from rendering contemporaneous service to the state in other capacities. As a member of the State Board of Health, as a regent of the State University for successive years, and as a member of the legislature, Dr. Rowell gave to the commonwealth the best service of which his loyal heart, fine intellect and profound experience was capable. He died wearing the harness of public duty, in the midst of his term as mayor of the City of Fresno that he served so willingly and loved so well.

Dr. Rowell's death is a public misfortune. It brings a loss to the state. We mourn his going, and, as we loved the man, we honor his memory.

#### THE LATE DR. ROWELL

By A. J. Waterhouse in San Francisco Star

With the passing of Dr. Rowell, of Fresno, a good man went to his long rest; a kind and helpful man whose every day registered some blessing bestowed on those who needed blessing. A physician

by profession, he gave his services as freely and completely to those who could not pay as to those who had wealth to recompense him. He was, indeed, the ideal physician.

His hours of work were given to his profession, occasional moments of relaxation to his pet, the Fresno Republican. He started the Republican when to be a Republican in Fresno was almost to be an outcast, and in its early days of struggle the personal popularity he so abundantly deserved was its supreme asset. He saw it grow to be a power in the state, and never, to my knowledge, did he attempt to dictate to its editors the course they should pursue, nor was the business office permitted to direct them.

He was punctiliously honest. Year after year the Southern Pacific sent him a pass, and year after year he returned it. A simple incident this, but it indicates the sterling character of the man. Of how many newspaper proprietors in this state could a similar thing be said?

He could see no virtue in any political creed save that of Republicanism, for he had absorbed his faith in the days when that name meant much, and, as rock-rooted, he stood on that creed. Count this a virtue or a defect; at any rate there was white honesty in it.

Nearly three years I worked on his paper, and as I write I see him, in fancy, walking into the old office. Generally he came about 11 or 12 o'clock at night, after his good day's work as a physician was done. Leaning against a desk, with his halo of prematurely white hair adding to the beauty of his face, he would talk for a time, and then he would go—perhaps to needed rest, possibly on some late errand of kindest mercy.

He was a good man, and some other might easier have been spared. Whatever the future may hold for us, all is well with him.











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